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A LETTER
TO
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THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF
The University of Pennsylvania.

BY
F. A. GENTH.

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F. W. Clarke.

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CHEMICAL LABORATORY,

No. 111 S. 10th Street,

PHILADELPHIA, June 25, 1888.

To my Friends and the Public:

The following letter will explain itself.

It was written and presented to the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania in the hope that a clear and full statement of my case would lead to a favorable conclusion.

However, several days before this letter was read at the meeting of the Board, held on June 19, it was evident that, *under all circumstances*, the Board would sustain the action of the Provost and the Committee on Science, and would exercise the right which it claims by its charter, to remove a Professor at any time without cause.

Very kind efforts have been made to induce me to send my resignation before this meeting, to avoid an adverse vote against me; but, as for half a life-time I have been working diligently and, to the best of my knowledge, for the interest and reputation of the University, I saw no good reason

why I should give it this gratification, and preferred to leave the odium of ingratitude rest upon the Board of Trustees.

The letter of the Provost of April 18, 1888, is not ingenuous. The reasons given there will better apply to other departments than my own, and my department is certainly not alone chargeable with "the regular annual occurrence of an immense deficit."

You will readily understand that the retrogression of the University can be fairly chargeable to other causes than those connected with me.

F. A. GENTH.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,

June 4, 1888.

To the Honorable, the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania :

GENTLEMEN:—A few days ago I received the following communication :

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY, May 21, 1888.

Prof. Frederick A. Genth, Ph.D., Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy :

DEAR SIR:—I am instructed by the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania to inform you that at the meeting of the Board held May 15, 1888, it was

“*Resolved*, That, whereas the resignation of Professor F. A. Genth has been requested by this Board, and the request refused, that the Secretary is directed to convey to him notice of the charges preferred by the Provost and the Standing Committee on the Department of Science, and the request that he will transmit to the Board his answer in writing to said charges, to be laid before the stated meeting of the Trustees to be held on the fifth day of June next.”

I beg to enclose a copy of the minutes containing the charges,

Very respectfully,

JESSE Y. BURK,
Secretary.

Copy :

From the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held May 15, 1888 :

“The Provost and the Standing Committee on the Department of

Science report that an examination of the teaching in the Chair of Chemistry and Mineralogy, and its administration by Professor Genth, discloses :

- “1. That his teaching in that chair is inefficient.
- “2. That his administration of the duties of his office is unsatisfactory and detrimental to the interests of the University.

“They therefore present these charges for the action of the Trustees under Section 22 of the Statutes.”

A true copy.

JESSE Y. BURK,

Secretary.

In reply to this, I most respectfully beg to submit the following :

That these charges are so vague, evasive and indefinite that the only answer which I can give is that they are unwarranted, as they cannot be substantiated by facts.

I believe it to be my duty, not only to the Trustees of the University, but also to myself, to give a full statement of the whole occurrences ; you will permit me, therefore, to enter more fully into the details connected with this unpleasant controversy.

At the close of last year I was invited by the Provost, Dr. William Pepper, to meet him and Mr. J. Vaughan Merrick, Chairman on the Committee of the Department of Science, for the purpose of *discussing some of the details of the instruction in chemistry.*

At this meeting the Provost dwelled very largely upon the great falling off of the students and great deficiencies which occur every year, and that the Trustees would not continue to put their hands in

their pockets to make them good, and that for this reason the expenses had to be cut down; that the Trustees, therefore, had concluded, that, after the expiration of the present college year, the teaching force of the Chemical Department would consist only of myself, with one Assistant Professor and one Assistant; that my son had no future at the University, that he would be paid up to the time when his contract expires (January 5, 1889), but that he would not be re-appointed.

At the same meeting I was charged with having neglected my duties in not giving personal instruction; that I used the University to further my private interests, and that for these reasons the University had been losing students.

Protesting against these assertions, I stated that although the greater portion of my time was devoted to scientific research, the teaching of the students was not in any way neglected; that the plans and the details were carefully worked out by me and the instruction carried out under my constant supervision by my son and an assistant; that nothing is done in the Laboratory with which I am not constantly familiar, and that the door between my private Laboratory and that of the students being generally open, the students have been requested to consult me at any time, of which they very frequently have availed themselves; that in my recitations I constantly review the work done in the Laboratory, and select for discussion such

subjects which had presented any particular difficulties *in the Laboratory*.

I can not see what else could be asked of the chief of any chemical department, who, in the opinion of all competent judges, should devote the greatest part of his time to build up a reputation for the same.

The Provost replied "*that scientific investigations were of no use and benefit to the University at all; that I should give more personal instruction,*" to all of which Mr. Merrick acquiesced.

Although deeply wounded by the insult offered and the attack upon my honor and integrity, for the sake of peace, and in consideration of the financially embarrassed condition of the University, I submitted to the request of the Trustees, made known to me by the Provost, and concluded to abandon for the future all scientific work and devote my time to the personal instruction of the students; and I immediately commenced to carry out the wishes of the Trustees by throwing away all the work which I had already done on a new and interesting scientific investigation.

The other points of attack by the Provost at the meeting I shall answer further on.

Always desirous to comply with any of the wishes of the Board of Trustees, I went to work earnestly and diligently and began to write out notes for a new course of lectures and the plans for the future instruction in analytical chemistry,

necessitated by the limited force of instructors; and was under the impression that the whole matter was settled; the sequel, however, will show that I was mistaken. The Provost was evidently not satisfied that I had submitted to the wishes of the Board of Trustees; his plan was to have me removed, and, therefore, as I am informed my case was re-opened again in February, at a meeting of the Board, and the matter referred to a committee of *six*, who were requested to make an investigation.

What *that* investigation was, I do not know—it was certainly *a one-sided, hence unjust one*, as said committee did not take the trouble to learn what I had to say in this matter. The result of this *investigation* was that I was condemned without a hearing. Not knowing anything of what had been going on, I was very much surprised, when I received the following letter:

1811 SPRUCE STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

To Prof. F. A. Genth:

DEAR DOCTOR GENTH:—I need not preface my communication by any expression of my personal regret for the state of affairs which has been for a number of years developing in the College Department, and which has finally led the Trustees to determine on a more or less complete reorganization of some of its branches.

The progressive increase in cost of maintenance, the stationary position of receipts and of number of students, the regular annual recurrence of an immense deficit, these conditions persisting during much more than a decade, while the College Department of other Universities, and, indeed, all other departments of our own University, have, during the same period, shown unprecedented development and prosperity, render it imperative to effect changes which will secure a re-

striction of expenses with full efficiency of instruction obtained by the more vigorous personal exertions of the members of the teaching force.

Among the special departments, in the judgment of the Trustees thus requiring immediate reorganization is that of Chemistry. I am accordingly instructed by the unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees to request, as an indispensable preliminary to such reorganization, your resignation of the Chair of Chemistry and Mineralogy, to take effect at the close of the present College year.

I need not assure you that this action is based solely on a conception of the administrative needs of the College Department, and it implies no diminution of the cordial personal feeling towards you on the part of the Trustees, or of their appreciation of your eminent scientific attainments.

I have the honor to remain,

Yours faithfully,

April 18, '88.

WILLIAM PEPPER,

Provost.

My reply to this letter was :

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA,

April 19, 1888.

William Pepper, M.D., Provost of the University of Pennsylvania :

DEAR SIR :—Your communication of 18th inst. at hand and noted. Replying, I beg leave to say that, as there are always two parties necessary to make a bargain, so are also two necessary to break one. I must therefore consult counsel before I decide what course I shall elect.

Very respectfully yours,

F. A. GENTH.

This was answered by the Provost as follows :

1811 SPRUCE STREET.

Prof. F. A. Genth :

DEAR DR. GENTH :—Referring to your reply to my former communication, I now send you a copy of the Statutes of the University and beg your attention to the last paragraph in Section 23, on page 13. These statutes have been in force for fully thirty years, the edition of which I now send you a copy having been revised in 1885, simply to embody the new arrangement about the Provost.

As you speak of consulting counsel, I thought it might facilitate

matters to request your attention to this provision. I shall lay your letter before the Board of Trustees at their meeting on Tuesday. I may be permitted to add that I should advise you to send a definite answer at an early day.

I have the honor to remain,

Yours respectfully,

April 21, '88.

WILLIAM PEPPER,

Provost.

The Provost knows perfectly well that the old statutes, which were in force at the time of my election in 1872, contain no provision by which a Professor could be arbitrarily removed, and that his position was a permanent one; therefore, his referring to the *revised* statutes can be considered only as a *threat*.

No man of honor and self-respect can be intimidated by a threat; my reply, therefore, was the following:

William Pepper, M.D., Provost of the University of Pennsylvania:

DEAR SIR:—I beg leave to acknowledge your communication of April 21, 1888.

Very respectfully yours,

F. A. GENTH.

As it appears that the Board of Trustees has no idea what I have done from the time when I was elected Professor of Chemistry in the Departments of Arts and Sciences until the present day, you will allow me to give a full account of the scientific investigations which I have made. This large amount of work could not have been done, if the Board of Trustees had not voted me two assistants

to look after the details and the drudgery of giving instruction in the elements of analytical chemistry, so that the greater portion of my time could be devoted to scientific research.

At the time of my election in 1872 my record shows already 56 papers and pamphlets, on chemical, mineralogical and geological subjects; the 57th was published, like most of my subsequent papers, as "Contributions from the Laboratory of the University of Pennsylvania," and was of No. 1 of that series.

1873. No. 1. Corundum—Its Alterations and Associated Minerals.

A pamphlet of 46 pages, containing in thirty articles the results of between two and three years labor. *Proceedings Am. Phil. Soc.*, Sept. 19, 1873.

1874. No. 2. Investigation of Iron Ores and Limestones from Centre, Blair and Huntingdon Counties, Pa. *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, Feb. 6, 1874.

1874. No. 3. Reply to Dr. T. Sterry Hunt. *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, July 17, 1874.

1874. No. 4. On American Tellurium and Bismuth Minerals. *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, Aug. 21, 1874.

This investigation embraces the following :

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. On Native Tellurium. | 7. On Calaverite. |
| 2. On Tetradymite. | 8. On Tellurate of Copper and Lead. |
| 3. On Altaite. | 9. On Bismuthinite. |
| 4. On Hessite. | 10. On Schirmerite, a new mineral. |
| 5. On Petzite. | |
| 6. On Sylvanite. | |

1875. No. 5. Preliminary Report on Mineralogy of Pennsylvania. B. of the 2d Geol. Sur. of Penna. 206 pages.

No. 6. Second Preliminary Report on the Mineralogy of Penna. B², pages 207-238.

1876. No. 7. On some American Vanadium Minerals. *Am. Journal Science* [3], xii, pages 32-36. It contains articles on Roscoelite and Psittacinite, a new mineral.

1877. No. 9. On some Tellurium and Vanadium Minerals. Proc. Am. Phil. Soc., Aug. 17, 1877.

It contains the following articles :

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. On Native Tellurium. | 7. On Ferrotellurite, 'a new mineral. |
| 2. On Hessite. | |
| 3. On Coloradoite, a new mineral. | 8. On Roscoelite. |
| 4. On Calaverite. | 9. On a Green Mineral from Colorado (Aluminous Roscoelite). |
| 5. On Tellurite. | |
| 6. On Magnolite, a new mineral. | 10. On Volborthite. |

No. 8. Tamaqua Gold. In Miners' Journal, Pottsville, June 28, 1877. This is a full investigation of the alleged discovery of gold, platinum and other precious metals in Schuylkill County, and exposure of a great fraud.

1879. No. 10. On Pyrophyllite from Schuylkill County. Proc. Am. Phil. Soc., July 18, 1879.

No. 11. South Carolina Phosphates. In Third Annual Report of the Pa. Board of Agriculture for 1879.

No. 12. Examination of North Carolina Uranium Minerals. Am. Chem. Journ., i, pages 87-93.

It contains articles

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| 1. On Uranotile. | 3. On Phosphuranylite, a new mineral. |
| 2. On Gummite. | |

1881. No. 13. Analyses of Minerals and Rocks from Bucks, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties, by F. A. G. and F. A. G., Jr. In Report C^b, Second Geol. Survey of Pa., pages 94-136.

No. 14. Minerals and Mineral Localities of North Carolina, by F. A. G. and W. C. Kerr, being Chapter i of Vol. ii of the Geology of North Carolina. 122 pages.

No. 15. In H. H. Gorringe's Egyptian Obelisks.

1. Analysis of Plagioclase from the Granite of the Obelisk.
2. Analysis of Cement attached to the Pyramidion.
3. Analysis of Bronze from the Crabs of the Obelisk.
4. Analyses of Paints on Images about 4000 Years Old. ^a Yellow and Gilt Paint ; ^b Black Paint ; ^c Red Paint.

1882. No. 16. Analysis of Hiddenite, the Emerald Green Spodumene from North Carolina. Am. Jour. of Science [3], xxiii, page 68.

No. 17. Contributions to Mineralogy. Proc. Am. Phil. Soc., Aug. 18, 1872.

It contains the following articles :

- I. 1. Corundum altered into Spinel.
2. " " " " Zoisite.

3. Corundum altered into Feldspar and Mica.
4. " " " Margarite.
5. " " " Fibrolite.
6. " " " Cyanite.
7. When were the Corundum Alterations Formed?
- II. Alteration of Orthoclase into Albite.
- III. Alteration of Talc into Anthophyllite.
- IV. Talc, pseudomorphous after Magnetite.
- V. Gahnite.
- VI. Rutile and Zircon from the Itacolumite of Edge Hill, Pa.
- VII. Sphalerite and Prehnite from Cornwall, Pa.
- VIII. Pyrophyllite in Anthracite.
- IX. Beryl from Alexander County, N. C.
- X. Niccolite from Colorado.
- XI. Artificial Alisonite.
1883. No. 18. On Robert Wilhelm Bunsen. In *Encyclopedia Americana*, i.
1884. No. 19. On Herderite. *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, Oct. 17, 1884.
1885. No. 20. On the Vanadates and Iodyrite from Lake Valley, N. M., by F. A. G. and G. vom Rath, with four wood cuts. *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, April 17, 1885.
- It contains:
 1. Vanadinite.
 2. Endlichite, a new species.
 3. Descloizite.
 4. Iodyrite.
- The German (revised) edition of the same paper contains five wood cuts.
- No. 21. Contributions to Mineralogy. *Proc. Am. Phil. Soc.*, Oct. 2, 1885.
- Embracing the following articles:
 1. Tin and Associated Minerals.
 2. Joséite and Tetradymite.
 3. Seleniferous Galenobismutite.
 4. Argentobismutite.
 5. Cosalite.
 6. Schirmerite and Beegerite.
 7. Tetrahedrite—Sylvanite.
 8. Polybasite.
 9. Arsenopyrite and Scorodite.
 10. Alteration of Magnesian Limestones from Berks County, Pa.
 - a. Brucite.
 - b. Deweylite, Aragonite, Calcite.
 - c. Pseudomorph of Deweylite after Aragonite.
 - d. Serpentine.

11. Ilmenite from N. C.—Oligoclase.
 12. Topaz from Stoneham, Me.
 13. Orthoclase from French Creek, Chester County, Pa.
 14. Muscovite, pseudomorphous after Nephelite?
 15. Stilpnomelane Pseudomorphs. Ankerite.
 16. Calamine.
 17. Titanite.
 18. Vanadinite.
 19. Annabergite.
 20. Dr. Clemens Winkler and Herderite.
1886. No. 22. Analysis of Pseudomorphs from Magnet Cove, Ark., Am. Jour. Soc. [3], xxxi, Jan., 1886.
- No. 23. On an Undescribed Meteoric Iron from E. Tennessee, with two photographic plates. Proc. Am. Nat. Soc., Dec. 28, 1886.
1887. No. 24. Contributions to Mineralogy. With one phototype plate and three wood-cuts. Proc. Am. Phil. Soc., March 18, 1887.
- The articles treated in this paper are:
- I. On the Occurrence of Tin Ores in Mexico.
 1. On Cassiterite.
 - a. Cassiterite, red variety.
 - b. Cassiterite, yellow variety.
 - c. Cassiterite, pseudomorphous after Hematite.
 - d. Cassiterite, pseudomorphous after Magnetite.
 2. Hematite.
 3. Mimetite and Pseudomorphs of Mimetite after Anglesite.
 - II. Vanadinite and Descloizite.
 - III. Pyrite, pseudomorphous after Pyrrhotite.
 - IV. Hessite.
 - V. Tantalite.
 - VI. Allanite.
 - VII. Willemite.
 - VIII. Hisingerite, pseudomorphous after Calcite.
1888. No. 25. On Lansfordite, a new mineral. Groth's Zeitschrift für Krystallographie. In Press.
- No. 26. Minerals and Mineral Localities of North Carolina, by F. A. G. and the late W. C. K. Revised and enlarged edition of No. 14 brought up to date. In Press.
- No. 27. On Two Minerals from Delaware County, Pa. 1. Gahnite. 2. Columbite. Ready for publication in Proc. Ac. Nat. Sciences.

This array of work, done during the sixteen years in which I had the honor to be chief of the Chemical Department, certainly shows that I have not been idle and that I have been hard at work for the interest and the reputation of the University.

The Provost, Dr. Pepper, however, in the meeting which I had with him and Mr. Merrick, told me, when I referred to this work, that *scientific research was of no use and benefit to the University.*

That Dr. Pepper only very recently must have arrived at this conclusion, is proved by the following letters which he sent me in acknowledgment of the receipt of separate copies which I had presented to him:

1811 SPRUCE STREET.

Dr. F. A. Genth:

DEAR DOCTOR:—Allow me to acknowledge with great pleasure the receipt of your very valuable and new analyses of mineral waters.

I am happy to say they are not too late to be placed in my book.

Very sincerely yours,

November 9, 1880.

WILLIAM PEPPER.

1811 SPRUCE STREET.

Professor F. A. Genth:

DEAR SIR:—I beg to acknowledge the receipt and also to thank you for the interesting pamphlet which you have kindly sent to me.

Yours very truly,

September 26, 1885.

WILLIAM PEPPER.

1811 SPRUCE STREET.

Dr. Pepper begs to thank Professor Genth for his interesting pamphlet on "An Undescribed Meteoric Iron from East Tennessee."

February 22, 1887.

1811 SPRUCE STREET.

Dr. Pepper begs to thank Professor Genth for his interesting pamphlet, "Contributions to Mineralogy."

May 20, 1887.

After, in the above statements, I have given you an idea of the amount of work which I have done for the scientific reputation of the University, it now remains to answer the first charge, viz., "that the teaching in the chair is inefficient."

I claim that the experience which I have gained in teaching chemistry during the last forty-four years has made me the most competent judge how this science ought to be taught, and I also claim that the teaching of practical chemistry in the Laboratory of the University has been as good as it can be done under the embarrassed financial circumstances of the University, and I believe that it has been better than in most of the other institutions in this country, and I appeal, in order to sustain this assertion, to the majority of the students of the 1st and 2d Section who have worked in the Laboratory during the last sixteen years, and also to the great number of persons and institutions who have given employment to our students. Many of them occupy high and responsible positions, and I have always inquiries for young chemists, because the chemical students of the University of Pennsylvania are preferred to those of other institutions. But not only the chemical students who have done their duty in the Laboratory find ready employment, but also quite a number of those from the 2d Section have obtained *chemical positions*. I do not claim that all the students who worked in the Laboratory were good students, and among those who were not, it would be easy to find

malcontents who would speak against me and my methods of teaching.

Are they competent? Are they to be heard?

I must confess that I do not understand the drift of the second charge. "That his administration of the duties of his office is unsatisfactory and detrimental to the interest of the University."

If this is the case, it is most remarkable that this has only been discovered after this "*unsatisfactory administration*" has been in practice for sixteen years. It would only have been necessary that the Board of Trustees would have given me a hint to correct, if there had been anything which was to be corrected. On the contrary, my administration has been repeatedly approved of by the very men who bring these charges. If I look upon my administration, I can say that it has brought, on account of my reputation, and that which I have made for the University, quite a number of students, and that with the exception of Prof. Haupt's (3d Section: Civil Engineering), no department has as many students now and had it for the last years as that of chemistry, and that it is misrepresenting facts, when it is said the Chemical Department had been losing students by my neglect of duty. But this has not only been so during the past years, it promises to continue so in the future, *if my system of instruction is to be continued*, and from our present knowledge the next class will have five regular students, and five specials have already applied for admission; the class will there-

fore be as large as the present one, and possibly larger, as the special students generally call not much before the opening of the new college year.

I also know that by my administration thousands of dollars have been saved to the University, and this is no secret to a number of the members of the Board of Trustees. The discipline in my rooms was always perfect, and in the sixteen years I never had a case before the Committee of Discipline.

I must confess that I am at a loss to know how the second charge can be sustained.

I have only one more matter to refer to.

In the meeting between the Provost, Mr. Merrick and myself, I was charged with using the University for the advancement of my private interest.

In answer to this attack upon my honor and integrity, I beg leave to submit that, when, unsolicited by me, a number of friends in and outside of the Board of Trustees secured my election as Professor of Chemistry in the Departments of Arts and Science, the small salary offered by the Board of Trustees, being no equivalent for the services to be rendered, if I was compelled to devote my whole time to the University, it was *distinctly* understood that I should continue my private business.

Then, I was fully aware that moving away so far from the business centre, the greater portion of private work would be lost, a fact which unfortunately has actually occurred, so that I have really

hardly any private business, excepting that which I do for the Board of Agriculture.

However, I have never allowed my private business to interfere with my duties of the University, and as I, on an average, work between nine and ten hours a day in the Laboratory, I could accomplish this result without any difficulty. The great advantage of the work for the Board of Agriculture is, that the bulk of it comes in two seasons -- late in the spring, when the duties at the University are light and the examinations of the Post Seniors are beginning, and after the 1st of August, before the new college year commences.

After thus having fully stated the whole facts of the case, I believe that they will sustain my opinion that, having during the whole period of sixteen years always worked diligently and, to the best of my knowledge and ability, for the interest of the University, the conclusion must be that the charges brought against me are most unjust and have assailed my honor and integrity.

In conclusion, permit me to express the hope that the Board of Trustees, after giving this communication a careful and unbiased deliberation, will do me justice, withdraw these charges, sustain me in my position and give me a distinct and complete vindication of my honor and integrity.

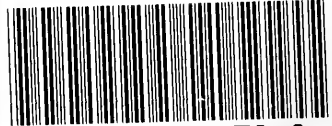
I have the honor to remain,

Your obedient servant,

F. A. GENTH.

June 4, 1888.

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